

DEC -1 1921 ✓

TITLE PAGE

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INTRIGUE

Scenario by Alfred Halm. ✓

A photoplay in five reels.

Author of Photoplay Howells Sales Co., Inc., U.S.A. ✓

Synopsis

The story opens in the office of Robert Durand, Prefect of Police in Paris, a disciple of respectability who makes few allowances for men and none for women. The Continental Bank has just requested Durand's Department to keep an eye on their cashier, who is having an affair with Charlotte Barbusse, the young daughter of "Diamond Marie" Barbusse, a notorious gambling house proprietor. Secret Service reports show that the mother has brought the girl up in a convent school with a view to making capital of her by marrying her to her "business partner", another shady character, Henri Fischer, who has become rich as a gambler.

Durand, worried that a bank cashier should keep such bad company, orders a raid upon the Barbusse card rooms in hope of disillusioning the youngster.

It happens that this night is a very important one in the career of young Charlotte Barbusse, who has been struggling to free herself from the life into which she has been dragged by a scheming mother. The mother is trying to force a marriage between Charlotte and Fischer, the gambler; but the girl prefers a poor man and a straight road. She tells the bank cashier, who calls at a crucial moment, that, if they marry her to Fischer, he'll make an adventuress of her; and the cashier decides to make sure that this doesn't happen by marrying her himself that very night.

Just at this moment, Durand and his men break into the card rooms. Charlotte throws herself on her knees before the Prefect, begging him not to cause a scandal that night, as it is her one chance to marry a man who will take her out of this life; but Durand refuses to listen and places everyone under arrest. The cashier is appalled at the idea of facing this sort of a scandal; and Charlotte gives back his ring and goes away forever. The girl, her prospects of happiness ruined, shakes her fist at the Prefect and says "Tonight you have lighted a firebrand which shall some day destroy you—that I promise you."

Two years later finds Henri Fischer again in Paris, married to Charlotte and prospering. He is playing for new and dangerous stakes. The old autocracy in Germany is planning a coup and Fischer is acting as a paid spy in Paris, communicating with the Berlin party by wireless from his house. His special mission is to secure the official French cipher code for the Kaiserist party. Even his young wife is part of the plot. Fischer forces her to attend a party at the home of Minister of State Beauvais in order to pump the youngsters from the legations.

At this party, Charlotte meets Pierre Durand, the young son of the Prefect of Police, whose knowledge of the world begins at the top and ends at the bottom of his piano keyboard. She invites him to come and play for her alone, with a view to securing the code book and a revenge upon his father at the same time.

Young Durand goes and has a wild love affair with Charlotte. Fischer leaves Paris and goes to Berlin, after receiving a wirelessly warning from his confederates that he is being watched. Charlotte uses this as a pretext to in-

vite Pierre to her house, asking him to bring his father's code book so that they may arrange a cipher wherein to write each other love letters. After getting the book, she turns him out of the house. Meanwhile, Prefect Durand has received orders from the Minister of State to investigate the treasonable activities of the Fischers. He plans to search the house, although he feels that the whole affair is a false alarm.

Pierre, heartbroken, goes to his home and puts away the only souvenir of his love affair, Charlotte's handkerchief which is saturated in her favorite perfume, Jasmine. Then he decides to see her once more and ask her what has caused this sudden change of heart.

There follows a scene between Charlotte and Pierre in which she once again refuses to continue her love affair with the boy or even to return his father's code book to him. Just then Prefect Durand and his men call at the house and demand admittance. Charlotte orders Pierre out of the house by a secret door, and her agitation causes him to demand furiously, "are you expecting a lover?" She sees her chance to cause more suffering to the son of the man she hates, and answers "yes!" Pierre is dragged into a side room by the mother, but manages to break away from her long enough to peep back through the keyhole and see his father, the Prefect, kissing Charlotte's hand - a greeting which the son, of course, misconstrues. He leaves the house by a secret door, broken and miserable believing that his father is the lover.

Prefect Durand, who in his heart does not believe that Charlotte is a spy, makes a perfunctory search of the house - in which nothing is discovered, as Fischer has already shipped his wireless away - and seizes her correspondence, with a promise that he will return it unread unless he is ordered to press his investigation. He starts by being very polite and sympathetic, and ends by falling in love with Charlotte.

Charlotte is tremendously impressed by Prefect Durand, who, instead of appearing as the ogre of her imagination, is a most charming gentleman. In fact, she, too falls in love.

"I can't go on with this intrigue against Durand's boy" she tells her mother after he has left with his men. "I have hated Prefect Durand, and now I am discovering that love is only a step from hate". But this resolve comes just too late. When he returns home that night, Prefect Durand finds that his son, Pierre, has killed himself. The only clue to his motives in the suicide lie in a woman's handkerchief which is clutched in the hand of the boy. His father guesses that a woman caused the tragedy, but does not know who the woman is.

"God grant that I meet the woman who was the cause of this" he prays. His prayer is answered, unawares, the very next day. Charlotte, overwhelmed with remorse, calls upon him to try to comfort him in his bereavement. An intimacy springs up which, through the weeks that follow, become a full fledged love affair.

Meanwhile, Henri Fischer, in Berlin, is growing impatient. He writes threatening notes to his wife, telling her that if she does not join him, he will expose her to "her detective lover". She shows the note

to Durand, and makes a confession, telling him that her ~~husband~~ husband has been a spy and that she has been his tool in these plots. Durand, horrified and disillusioned, starts to stalk out of the room, and then Charlotte, in a last effort to hold him, tells him that it was he - Durand, who took away her chance to go straight when he broke up her love affair with the bank cashier in her girlhood.

"And still I love you", she says, finishing the story. Durand, much shaken, bows his head, as he realizes that he himself, is really at the bottom of the whole affair; and Charlotte hisses him in forgiveness. But a letter which reaches Durand that night, upon his return from Charlotte's house, prevents a happy ending at this point. It is from the Minister of State who urges Durand not to let his friendship with Charlotte Fischer prevent him from investigating her treasonable activities, which are becoming a menace to the whole nation. The Prefect of Police decides to do his duty, and goes to his office where Charlotte's correspondence still unread, is filed. He breaks the seals and finds, among her letters, his stolen code book and a photograph of his son. He suspects the truth and goes back to his home, where he examines the handkerchief found in Pierre's hand. It is saturated with Jasmine. Durand goes at once to Charlotte's house. He is pale with suppressed fury. She thinks he has come as a lover and admits him at once. He caresses her, tries to make up his mind to strangle her, makes a false start, and then stops unable to proceed. He is torn between his anger and his love for Charlotte.

Charlotte suddenly becomes away of his state of mind and tries to run out of the room. That precipitates the final tragedy. Durand swings around, saying "You have tried to betray my country" and, before she can reach the door, he catches her and carries her to a bed to choke her. She does not try to defend herself.

"It is true- but you, at least, I have loved", she says.

Durand is still unable to spur himself to the final act of the tragedy. He kisses her; then reaches in his pocket, produces the handkerchief, and sniffs at the scent. It is her perfume - jasmine.

She draws back, terrified, as she realizes that he has guessed the truth about her connection with his son's death. He takes her by the throat and we fade out.

Meanwhile, the Minister of State, in his office, is awaiting his report. Durand comes in, pale and much agitated.

"She will do no more harm to France or to our sons" he says. "I have killed her".

He sinks into a chair. The Minister of State throws an arm about him and begins to question him excitedly and we fade out.

The end.

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